

Impunity



To be published in April 2017 by Amsterdam University Press:

The End of Silence

In the late 1960s, between one and two million people were killed by Indonesian president Suharto's army in the name of suppressing communism—and more than fifty years later, the issue of stigmatisation is still relevant for many victims of the violence and their families. *The End of Silence* presents the stories of these individuals, revealing how many survivors from the period have been so strongly affected by the strategy used by Suharto and his Western allies that these survivors, still afraid to speak out, essentially serve to maintain the very ideology that led to their persecution.

The author: Soe Tjen Marching

Soe Tjen Marching is the founder of *Bhinneka Magazine* and the author of several books. She is Senior Lecturer in Indonesian at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and has taught at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London.

The Munir's murder report

The Jakarta Globe, 19-02-2017

Activists will soon file an appeal with the Supreme Court against a ruling that overturned the state information body's order to declassify the documents on the long-unsolved murder of prominent human rights defender Munir Said Thalib.

The State Secretariat, which is believed to be in possession of the files, has not obeyed the Public Information Commission's command to make them public in October.

The Jakarta State Administrative Court has overturned the commission's order on Thursday (16/02).

According to human rights activists, the verdict legalizes state crime. "The verdict confirms that the state, through its various instruments, keeps on covering Munir's case. We will file an appeal," Munir's wife Suciwati told the press in Jakarta on Saturday (18/02). "The ruling has been surrounded by irregularities; the panel of judges did not examine the case openly, but only invited related parties to the verdict reading," she added.

Thursday's ruling has raised the ire of human rights activists, who have already been angered by the State Secretariat's claim that it does not know the whereabouts of the files.

The secretariat is tasked with providing administrative assistance to the president. Activists insist that the case files were submitted by a fact-finding team to former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in June 2005.

Munir was poisoned with arsenic during a layover in Singapore in 2004 before boarding a flight to Amsterdam.

Former pilot Polycarpus Budihari Priyanto was sentenced to 14 years in prison for premeditated murder, however, the masterminds behind the murder remain unknown. The results of the fact-finding team's investigation have never been made public.

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Teenagers pass by a mural displaying prominent Indonesian activists in Jalan Veteran, Bogor city, West Java. 'Never forget' is written under the portraits of slain human rights defender Munir Said Thalib, poet and activist Wiji Thukul — who has been missing since 1998 — national hero Tan Malaka, and labor activist Marsinah, who was kidnapped and murdered in 1993. (Antara Photo/Arif Firmansyah)

Freedom of Religion

The blasphemy trial under pressure

The Jakarta Post, 20-02-2017

The Muslim People's Forum (FUI) has promised to hold a peaceful rally against Jakarta Governor Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama in front of the House of Representatives building on Tuesday.

FUI's rally coordinator, Bernard Abdul Jabbar, said on Monday more than 10,000 people would rally to demand the government remove Ahok from his position and that the police arrest him immediately for blasphemy.

"Many people want Ahok in jail," Bernard said at a press conference at the Jakarta Police headquarters. He denied rumors that the FUI would attempt to occupy the House.

"The FUI has nothing to do with that. We are not responsible for the fake reports. I can assure you that we will stage a peaceful rally. We chose the House as the location because it's a symbol of the people of Indonesia," he added.

Visiting a mosque Ahok stays outside

Tempo, 20-02-2017

In the area of Cipinang Melayu in East Jakarta a group of some 350 people took their refuge against the flooding in a mosque. The governor of Jakarta, Basuki Tjahaja Purnama or Ahok, came to visit them in their refuge. When he approached the Universitas Borobudur mosque's parking lot, the refugees, who had spread their mats on the tiled floor, invited him in, very enthusiastically, shouting they had voted for him and supported him.



Ahok did not follow that invitation and stayed outside. He spoke with the people about their situation and about the floodings in their living area.

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Freedom of Expression

Press Freedom Investigation in Papua Highlights Challenges for Local Journalists

by Tara Nissl — February 15, 2017 – <https://www.engagemedia.org/blog/press-freedom-investigation-papua-challenges-for-local-journalists>

Eight journalists from eight Indonesian media outlets traveled to West Papua last week to investigate media freedom and the safety of journalists in the region, after an international delegation called on Indonesia to address press freedom violations in 2015.

The World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers (WAN-IFRA) launched the investigation on January 30 in Jayapura, Merauke and Timika, where the Media Freedom Committee-Indonesia followed local journalists from Papuan news organisations for five days.

WAN-IFRA's Asian Regional Manager Eko Maryadi said: "We expect the program to send eight reporters from Jakarta, from non-Papuans to do reporting, that they can understand the issues, difficulties, and problems faced by journalists in Papua."

The Committee reported eight key findings:

- Government officials and security personnel are discriminatory towards OAPs ("original Papua persons");
- Journalists are stigmatised as pro-independence or pro-Homeland, leading to intimidation and fragmentation among the journalist community;
- Environmental damage through development programs are underreported due to heavy restrictions on the press.
- Strengthening journalism in Papua relies on an improved code of ethics, understanding of the journalist profession, use of technology and a business model that maintains the independence of the press;
- Journalists need to actively change the media perspective of Papua;
- 11 out of 16 foreign journalists who recently gained access to Papua were monitored by intelligence officials;

- Sexual harassment of female journalists in Papua is underreported;
- The quality of public services and competition depends on equitable access to communication infrastructure and information technology

More detailed reports were documented on the Committee's blog, featuring daily updates and interviews with journalists from Tabloid Jubi, Papua Salam, Mongabay.co.id and many more.

Journalists from the Papua South Post shared stories about police and government intimidation, including two publication bans in 2007 and 2008, being threatened with criminal law, and a prohibition on reporting on President Joko Widodo's Merauke investment program.

A journalist in Timika recalled a terrifying experience of being held at knifepoint and then stabbed. Another pointed to the difficulties faced by female journalists and the prevalence of sexual harassment.

The investigation marks one month before Indonesia will host the World Press Freedom Day in Jakarta on March 3, an honourable hosting position that the Pacific Freedom Forum (PFF) criticised Indonesia for holding due to ongoing restrictions and violations in Papua.

In July 2016, PFF Chair Titi Gabi urged Jakarta to "ensure that there is open access to West Papua for foreign media, and an end to abuses against local media."

Whether any changes will be made in the near future is questionable. Just recently, Suara Papua's website was blocked for SARA and publishing "negative" content, despite the government insisting that it does not censor journalistic websites.

Elections

Second round DKI Jakarta in April

Kompas, 16-02-2017

"WE have to wait for the official results," says the chairman of the Election Committee KPU Jakarta, Sumarno. But still the expectation of the second round is being discussed in

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anticipation. The plans are shared widely, considering also that the incumbent candidates have to go on leave in their second round campaign.

If everything is agreed, the second round will take place on 19 April. If one of the candidates does not accept the official results, the second round has to wait for a verdict by the Constitutional Court.

The publication of the official results is expected to take place from 25 till 27 February. The second round candidates will be announced on 4 March, but if a conflict has to be solved first, this can be postponed till 16 April. The second round campaign will last for only 10 days (6-15 April). The cooling days will be 16-18 April. Vote counting will be performed from 20 April till 1 May. The winning pair will be announced officially on 5 or 6 May, provided the results are not challenged by one of the candidates.

Both Basuki Tjahaja Purnama and Djarot Hidayat are acting governor and deputy who have to discontinue their daily work during the campaign for the second round. The Ministry of the Interior will set the rules for this brief campaign.

In the meantime, there are lessons from the first round with regard to the use of arguments relating to the four sensitive issues of SARA (Suku, Agama, Ras and Antargolongan: ethnicity, religion, race and class). Professor Azumardi Azra mentioned the SARA issues that have been brought to the table by the politicians. "They should learn from society that they deal with these issues in an adult way. He pointed to the fact that social issues in the political programs had been more decisive in the first round.

At a separate occasion an expert on urban sociology, Yayat Supriyatna said that there are two different kinds of arguments: rational and ideological ones. Voters are still influenced by issues that divide a society. "It is not necessary to consider the most successful team, the supporting political parties to decide which candidate to vote for, but rather generate distrust in the other team, like a "black campaign", he said. It would be better to stress which points in the program should be decisive, whether they are realistic and feasible for the city.

Democrat Party in wait-and-see-modus

The Jakarta Post, 17-02-2017

The Democratic Party is in wait-and-see mode before determining whether to support incumbent gubernatorial candidates Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama-Djarot Saiful Hidayat or the challengers Anies Baswedan-Sandiaga Uno.

The party's advisory board chairman EE Mangindaan said Friday that the party had yet to make a decision regarding which candidate would receive support from the party led by former president Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in the upcoming second round of the Jakarta gubernatorial election, after its nominees Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono and Sylviana Murni lost in the first round of the race.

"The important thing is that Agus graciously congratulated both Ahok and Anies for making it into the second round," Mangindaan said.

Quick count results after the first round of the election showed Ahok-Djarot on top, followed by Anies-Sandiaga in second place and the Democratic Party's Agus-Sylviana in third place.

Gerindra party and PKS support Anies-Sandiaga

The Jakarta Post, 17-02-2017

After successfully boosting support for gubernatorial candidate Anies Baswedan prior to the first round of the Jakarta election, Gerindra Party patron Prabowo Subianto is set to hit the campaign trail to gather more support for the candidate ahead of the second round.

Anies confirmed Prabowo's readiness in a statement on Friday. The former education and culture minister added that he also expected Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) president Sohibul Iman to join his campaign ahead of the runoff, in which he is likely to face tough competition against incumbent candidate Basuki "Ahok" Tjahaja Purnama.

"Of course they [Prabowo and Sohibul] will get involved in the campaign again. They have also been involved in communicating with other party leaders to discuss coalitions," he continued.

Considered Anies' main backer ahead of the poll, Prabowo played a key role in boosting voter support for the candidate before the Feb. 15 election. During his campaign, Prabowo

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repeatedly said he had made a mistake by deciding to support Joko “Jokowi” Widodo and Ahok in the Jakarta election in 2012. He emphasized that Anies was capable of being a better leader.

The ongoing vote recapitulation by the Jakarta General Elections Commission (KPU Jakarta) suggests that Anies and Ahok are in a tight race as both of them garnered around 40 percent of the vote in the first round. The third gubernatorial candidate, Agus Harimurti Yudhoyono, failed to qualify for the second round and has conceded defeat.

Social-economic Rights

Conflict Freeport vs. Indonesian government

The Jakarta Post, 20-02-2017

The House of Representatives will support the government if PT Freeport McMoran goes to an international arbitration tribunal to end the dispute over the contract agreement for its operations in Papua, a legislator has said. Satya Widya Yudha, the deputy chairman of House Commission VII overseeing mining affairs, said the government should not be worried about Freeport’s possible move.

“The company should not have used lay-offs as an issue. The interests of workers should not be pitted against the government,” he said as reported by kompas.com on Sunday.



Freeport's Grasberg mine in Mimika, Papua. (JP/Nethy Dharma Somba)

Previously, in response to Freeport’s plan to go to an international arbitration tribunal, Energy and Mining Resources Minister Ignasius Jonan said the government was ready to face the tribunal, saying that “such a move is better than exploiting worker lay-offs.”

Satya said Indonesia had experience at such tribunals and had won a dispute at an arbitration tribunal against mining company PT Newmont Nusa Tenggara. He admitted that the dispute would have an economic and social impact because it might disrupt the operation of the mine. However, he said Indonesia must confront the challenge in order to enforce its laws and regulations.

Freeport said it would only agree to convert its contract of work (CoW) to a special mining license if it secured a guarantee from the government on the firm’s long-term investment stability, including fiscal and legal certainty as already stipulated in the CoW signed in 1991.